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VIA EMAIL

June 5, 2020

JD Hickey
President & Chief Executive Officer
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee
1 Cameron Hill Circle
Chattanooga, TN 37402

Dear Dr. Hickey:

On behalf of the [Coalition of State Rheumatology Organizations](#) (CSRO) and other physician/patient advocacy groups, I write today to ask once again for BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee (BCBST) to avoid implementation of a proposed policy that will force patients to utilize your preferred specialty pharmacies for infusion therapies making it nearly impossible for treatments to be conducted in physician offices – under our care. If the new policy (scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2020) is allowed, it will result in policy holders experiencing delay or even stoppage of their treatments that have kept their inflammatory disease under control. At the very least we ask that you delay this policy during these chaotic times and discuss with us the real consequences of interfering with patients' treatments.

During this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, people are anxious and worried about their health. Those patients with chronic inflammatory conditions who are even more vulnerable to Covid19 should avoid the extra burdens of worrying if they can continue their medicine that has kept them well. This policy will only serve to create more anxiety and concern among patients who are the most vulnerable, particularly now when a sense of security and stability is what people are seeking.

Many employers fail to understand the ramifications of this policy. We are ready to educate them on the consequences it will have on their employees (our patients), particularly those with chronic illnesses. You owe it to your customers, insureds, and their families to do better.

Over the next several weeks CSRO, American College of Rheumatology, and many other physician and patient organizations will seek to further educate employers, legislators, and regulators on the dangers of this policy. At this critical time, we implore you once again, to reconsider the implementation of this policy.

We are on the front lines of medical care and will fight for our patients. We hope you will join us, learn the facts, and commit to policies that do not decrease access, for the most vulnerable among us, to the treatments that they need.

I hope to have the opportunity to discuss these concerns with you directly. I will be contacting your office on Monday June 8, 2020 schedule a meeting with you. In the meantime, I am available at madelainefeldman@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Feldman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".

Dr. Madeline Feldman
President, CSRO